

EATING RHYTHM – A regular meal rhythm will save your teeth

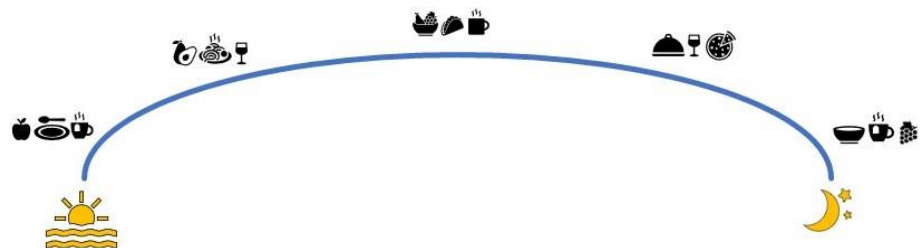
You may develop tooth decay even if you wash your teeth twice a day and clean between your teeth daily. If this is the case, the culprit is often your eating rhythm.

Almost all foods and drinks contain carbohydrates, from which the bacteria in your mouth produce acids that dissolve teeth. The most harmful of these are sugars. Regular mealtimes and a varied diet can protect teeth from decay.

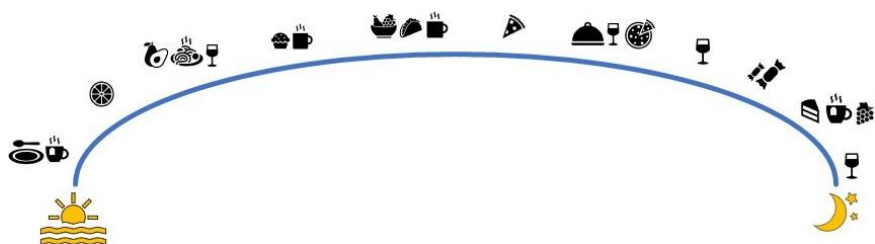
The number of times you eat per day is an important factor in terms of tooth decay.

- Your teeth can only withstand four to six meals per day. You should not snack or sip any beverages in between meals. When you keep your mouth empty for two to three hours in between meals/beverages, saliva will have enough time to repair the damage caused by the previous meal/drink.
- Avoid snacking. If you frequently put even a small amount of food/drink into your mouth, you will have a continuous acid attack. For example, just one bite of bread/a fruit or one sip of juice with no added sugar will start an acid attack.
- If there are too many acid attacks, your teeth will gradually start to decay. In the early stages of decay, the softer tooth enamel can become hard again and the decay can be stopped, provided that you improve your eating habits and maintain proper oral hygiene.

CONCENTRATE YOUR
MEALS



DO NOT EAT/DRINK ALL
THE TIME





THINGS TO BE NOTED EVERY DAY

- Only drink water outside mealtimes. However, unflavoured mineral water, black coffee or plain tea without any sugar, honey, lemon or milk will not cause an acid attack.
- Limit the number of meals you eat and only eat proper meals, i.e. combine several small snacks into one proper snack.
- Sugar in any form is particularly harmful to the teeth and contributes to tooth decay. The terms 'sucrose/saccharose' (ordinary sugar), 'fructose' (fruit sugar), 'honey' and 'glucose syrup' also refer to sugar.
- If you want to eat something sweet, do so in connection with your regular meals as a dessert immediately after the meal. Avoid repeatedly consuming sugar, i.e. don't drink juices or have sweets daily but only on special occasions.
- Do not add any sugar or honey to your baby's milk bottle.
- Do not dip your baby's dummy in sugar or honey.
- Do not eat crisps (potato chips), raisins or any other similar snacks often, as they will stick to your teeth and cause a prolonged acid attack.
- Avoid consuming sugar and snacks frequently and in large quantities. You should always consume them with a meal (outside the regular meal times no more than once a week).
- When considering the amount of sugar you are consuming, take into account the hidden sugar found in many products. Sugar is present in large quantities in foods such as yoghurts, flavoured cultured milk products (viili), custard, breakfast cereals, muesli, pastries, biscuits, ketchup, condiments, salad dressings, fresh juices, cocoa and raisins.
- If consumed often, acidic foods/beverages, regardless of whether they contain sugar, can corrode your tooth enamel, i.e. cause dental erosion. Apples, lemons and many other fruits, any products containing vinegar, lingonberries, flavoured soda water and many fresh juices are examples of acidic foods.
- Use xylitol after you have eaten, as it will cut off the acid attack and inhibit the bacteria that cause tooth decay. This way, you can reduce the risk of tooth decay.

SOURCES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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